



Eurogentest fellowship: report

Fellow	Dr Patricia Huezo-Diaz (PHD)
Host laboratory	Dr Michael Morris (MAM) Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory, Service of Genetic Medicine, Department of Genetic and Laboratory Medicine, University Hospitals, Geneva, Switzerland
Date	August 6 to 24, 2007
Aims	Obtain experience of working in an accredited genetic diagnostic laboratory
Detailed aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training on and experience of quality system - training on laboratory organization - participation in laboratory and clinical meetings - training in and experience of diagnostic approaches and procedures - training in and experience of result reporting - training in and experience of approach to test validation - development and evaluation of a new test for hemochromatosis testing (<i>HFE</i> C282Y and H63D), based on hyb probe method on the Roche LC480 - validation of <i>HFE</i> test.
Achievements	<p>Understanding of the requirements, approaches and philosophy of diagnostics, as opposed to research;</p> <p>Understanding of the importance and feasibility of working within a comprehensive quality system, in diagnostics;</p> <p>The visit convinced PHD that her career interest lies in genetic diagnostics;</p> <p>MAM fully supports this and would accept PHD for formal training (they will jointly look for the necessary funding).</p>
Problems	<p>Three weeks is a short period for such a visit, but with effort and organization from both sides it can still be successful.</p> <p>The language barrier could be a problem in similar situations (especially concerning written protocols and instructions), but this was not the case for us.</p>
Comments (fellow)	<p>In the three weeks that I spent with Dr Michael Morris and his team, I learnt a great deal about the organization and good teamwork needed to manage a well run diagnostics lab. This was the exact experience that I was looking for and after spending this time with them (which I felt was too short) I feel motivated to carry on with my aim of following a career in genetic diagnostics. I found that there are several differences between research and diagnostics, what impressed me most was the need for strict rigour and high quality in producing data. I particularly found it very useful to have been given a small project to work on and get hands on approach to dealing with developing an assay for diagnostics. This opened up my eyes to the various aspects involved with running a diagnostics lab such as keeping up with new technology, validation of new techniques, high quality standards needed, learning new software, and keeping precise record of all protocols, reagents and documentation. I especially enjoyed the open communication between the whole team when troubleshooting. I would very much like to have formal training and hope to work with Dr. Morris in the near future.</p>
Comments (host)	<p>We were pleased to host Patricia for this <i>stage</i>, which I consider very successful. Because of her lab experience and enthusiasm, it was possible to assign her a project (in collaboration with Isabelle Moix) and valuable progress was made (we hope this will lead to a small publication).</p> <p>We appreciate the financial support of EUGT which made this very successful visit possible.</p> <p>A comment to management: had Patricia been less experienced, 3 weeks would have been too short to do useful work and too long just too watch and learn: this should be considered in future applications.</p>